



Introduction

Checks, Stores, and More

Learning Objectives:

By the end of this section, you will be able to:

- Understand the rationale for changing to Any Authorized Retailer system.
- Recognize new WIC terminology coming with "Checks, Stores, and More".



What is “Checks, Stores, and More” About?

Congress believed if WIC programs issued checks to clients/caregivers that allowed them to shop at “Any Authorized Retailer” (AAR), grocery stores would compete harder to offer better prices and a better selection of WIC approved foods.

In 2004, Congress mandated states change their practice from providing “Retailer Specific” WIC checks to issuing WIC checks that can be used at Any Authorized Retailer. Washington WIC has been working towards making this change ever since.

As we began exploring the far reaching impacts of changing to an AAR system, we realized that policies, CIMS, materials, and more in significant retailer practices were affected; hence the name “Checks, Stores, and More”.

Transitioning to new terminology

One opportunity that comes with Checks, Stores, and More is the ability to transition to new and better terminology.

In general, we want to use words that clients are familiar with and commonly use in order to improve communication and understanding. We know it’s easy to pass along “WIC words” (jargon) used at the state office to the local staff, and there’s a chance that you might use those same words with your clients.

As with any transition, it takes time to make changes. Just as checks were called, “vouchers” and transfer cards were known as “VOC cards”, many common WIC words will shift to a better term over time.

Here are some specific examples of changing terminology and the rationale for the change:

- Clients more commonly use the word “store” than “retailer”. We are asking staff to shift towards using the word “store” when talking with clients about the place they are allowed to shop with WIC checks.



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- To align with the transition to using the word "store" rather than "retailer", we intend to use the terms "Any Washington WIC Approved Store" and "Any Approved Store", instead of "Any Authorized Retailer" or "AAR".
- CIMS is another place where terminology is changing. CIMS includes more than Client Services and Clinic Reports, the two CIMS applications you are most familiar with using in your clinic. In fact, there are over 30 applications included in CIMS, including Retailer Management, Client Locator, and other State WIC applications. You will notice that the word Client Services will be used as a better descriptor instead of CIMS throughout these materials, and in the future. We are using Client Services version 4.3. You may notice areas within 4.3 that continue to display "retailer" rather than "store". Those areas may be changed in future versions.

Table of changing terminology

Former Terminology	Current Terminology
Retailer	Store
AAR (project)	Any Washington WIC Approved Store Or Any Approved Store Or AAS
Vouchers	Checks Or Any Washington WIC Approved Store checks Or Any Approved Store checks Or AAS checks
AAR training	Checks, Stores, and More
VOC cards	Transfer cards
CIMS (Clinic Applications)	Client Services 4.3 And Clinic Reports

Note: Former and current terminology mean the same thing. Begin transitioning to the use of current terminology.



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What is included in “Checks, Stores, and More”?

A sneak preview:

- WIC checks for “Any Washington WIC Approved Store”
- Policy allows up to two people to shop with WIC checks
- ID requirement at store helps improves Program Integrity
- Education materials clarify WIC rules
- Transfer Card design helps staff with Transfer In data entry
- Enhanced Client Services, and more!

The advantages of “Checks, Stores and More” will be explored throughout these materials.